GENEROSITY

Mahatma Gandhi went from city to city, village to village collecting funds for the Charkha Sangh. During one of his tours he addressed a meeting in Orissa. After his speech a poor old woman got up. She was bent with age, her hair was grey and her clothes were in tatters. The volunteers tried to stop her, but she fought her way to the place where Gandhi Ji was sitting. “I must see him,” she insisted and going up to Gandhi Ji touched his feet. Then from the folds of her sari she brought out a copper coin and placed it at his feet. Gandhi Ji picked up the copper coin and put it away carefully. The Charkha Sangh funds were under the charge of Jamnalal Bajaj. He asked Gandhi Ji for the coin but Gandhi Ji refused. “I keep cheques worth thousands of rupees for the Charkha Sangh,” Jamnalal Bajaj said laughingly “yet you won’t trust me with a copper coin.” “This copper coin is worth much more than those thousands” Gandhi Ji said. “If a man has several lakhs and he gives away a thousand or two, it doesn’t mean much.” But this coin was perhaps all that the poor woman possessed. She gave me all she had. That was very generous of her. What a great sacrifice she made. That is why I value this copper coin more than a crore of rupees.